

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A system for providing distributed rendering services comprising:

a local rendering system ~~operable~~ to receive and render a render job, the render job having a plurality of render frames and an associated job description, the render job being associated with a motion sequence of graphic images;

at least one remote rendering system comprising a plurality of remote render servers and a second schedule server coupled to the plurality of remote render servers ~~and operable to receive~~ server, the at least one remote rendering system receiving from the local rendering system the render job and ~~render~~ rendering the render job by distributing one or more different render frames of the render job to at least two of the plurality of remote render servers for individual processing ~~and further operable to return~~ processing, the at least one remote rendering system further returning a result of the render job to the local rendering system, the second schedule server ~~operable to place~~ placing an I/O wrapper around the render job and any files accompanying the render job to permit access to the files only upon processing of the render job;

wherein the local rendering system comprises a plurality of local render servers and a first schedule server coupled to the plurality of local render servers ~~and operable to determine~~ servers, the local rendering system determining based at least in part on the job description, whether to render the render job locally by distributing one or more different render frames of the render job to at least two of the plurality of local render servers for individual processing or to send the render job to the at least one remote rendering system for distributed rendering; and

wherein the first schedule server ~~is operable to collect and deliver~~ collects and delivers to a remote rendering system, via a first hot folder and a communications medium, information associated with the render job.

2. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the at least one remote rendering system comprises a resource server, and wherein each remote render server ~~is operable to create~~ creates render slots for processing the render job.

3. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 2, wherein the second schedule server ~~is operable to receive~~ receives a render job from the local rendering system via a second hot folder and ~~distribute~~ distributes the render job to the at least two remote render servers based on information provided in the job description and further based on resource information stored in a resource database on the resource server, the resource information including availability information and specifications associated with a plurality of render slots created by the plurality of remote render servers.

4. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the first schedule server further comprises a new job queue and an outsourced job queue, the first schedule server ~~operable to place~~ placing a new render job in the new job queue and ~~to move~~ moving the new render job from the new job queue and ~~place~~ placing the new render job in the outsourced job queue when the job description associated with the new render job specifies remote rendering.

5. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 3, wherein the second schedule server comprises an active job queue, the second schedule server ~~operable to place~~ placing the render job, upon receiving it from the local rendering system, into the active job queue based, in part, upon the priority of the job and other information provided by the job description.

6. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, further comprising:

a resource database ~~operable to store~~ storing resource information, the resource information ~~operable to control~~ controlling distribution of render frames of the render job to the plurality of render ~~servers~~ servers, the resource information including availability information associated with a plurality of render slots created by the plurality of render servers.

7. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 3, wherein the second schedule server ~~is operable to deliver~~ delivers the completed render job to the local rendering system via the second hot folder and the communications medium.

8. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the first schedule server ~~is operable to receive~~ receives the completed job via the first hot folder, ~~place~~ places the results on a storage device, and ~~notify~~ notifies a supplier of the render job of completion of the render job, the first schedule server further ~~operable to remove~~ removing the render job from an outsourced job queue comprising one or more render jobs sent to the remote rendering system.

9. (Previously Presented) A computerized method for rendering images, comprising:

providing a render job having a plurality of render frames and an associated job profile , the render job being associated with a motion sequence of graphic images;

inserting the render job in a new job queue associated with a first schedule server coupled to a local rendering system;

removing the render job from the new job queue and placing it in an outsourced job queue when the job profile specifies remote rendering;

advancing the job in the outsourced job queue as other render jobs are removed from the outsourced job queue;

delivering the render job from the first schedule server via a first communications medium to a remote second schedule server for processing; and

distributing one or more different render frames of the render job via a second communications medium to a plurality of render servers coupled with the remote second schedule server for individual processing based at least in part on the job profile;

placing an I/O wrapper around the render job and any files accompanied therewith on the remote site to allow the files accompanying the render job to be accessed only upon processing of the render job.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein the job profile is based at least in part on a job description provided by a client.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 10, further comprising:

delivering the render job and information for rendering the render job from a first hot folder coupled to the first schedule server to a second hot folder coupled to the second schedule server; and

placing the render job in an active job queue associated with the second schedule server based in part on information provided in the job description and priority.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein distributing render frames of the render job to the plurality of render servers is based, in part, on resource information stored in a resource database associated with a resource server, the resource information including availability information associated with a plurality of render slots created by the plurality of render servers.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

delivering the completed render job back to the local rendering system from the second schedule server via the second hot folder to the first schedule server via the first hot folder and removing the render job from the active job queue by the second schedule server;

removing the render job from the outsourced job queue by the first schedule server; and

notifying the client of the completion of the job.

14. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for remotely rendering a render job comprising:

receiving a render job submitted by a client at a first rendering site, the render job having a plurality of render frames and being associated with at least one file stored at the first rendering site, the file storing information necessary to render the render job, the render job being associated with a motion sequence of graphic images;

transferring the render job from the first rendering site to a second rendering site, the second site remote from the first site, wherein the second rendering site ~~is operable to place~~ places an I/O wrapper around the render job and any files accompanying the render job to permit access to the files only upon processing of the render job;

transmitting a copy of the associated file from the first rendering site to the second rendering site;

storing the copy of the associated file at the second rendering site in a secure location inaccessible to entities other than the client;

distributing one or more different render frames of the render job to a plurality of remote render servers at the second rendering site for individual processing; and

rendering the render job by rendering the distributing render frames by the plurality of remote render servers.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 14, and further comprising redirecting requests by the plurality of remote render servers to access the associated file from a central file storage location to the secure location.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 14, and further comprising redirecting requests by the plurality of remote render servers to write an output file associated with the render job to a particular central storage area to the secure location.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 14, and further comprising storing the result of the rendered job in the secure location.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein transmitting a copy of the associated file comprises transmitting a copy of the file via a first hot folder in the first rendering site to a second hot folder on the second rendering site.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 17, and further comprising transmitting a copy of the result from the secure location on the second rendering site to a hot folder on the first site.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 14, wherein the first rendering site comprises a schedule server operable to determine whether to render the render job at the first rendering site or the second rendering site.